Tale Feathers

February 2006

Volume 73 Number 1

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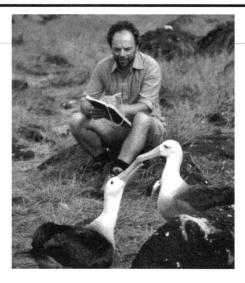
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ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

Friday, March 31St

Dr. Carl Safina, Eye of the Albatross: Visions of Hope and Survival

We are very pleased to announce our 2006 Annual Awards Dinner will again be hosted by Pat & Jack Lueders at the Cheshire Inn's Palladium Room at 6300 Clayton. Awards will be presented for Conservationist of the Year, Legislator of the Year and the Robert J. Terry Lifetime Achievement. A silent auction will be held, with proceeds directly benefiting the Society's conservation and education work around the region.

We are deeply honored to have Dr. Carl Safina as our keynote speaker. A prominent ecologist and author, Dr. Safina is a former vice president of the National Audubon Society and co-founder and current president of the Blue Ocean Institute. He has authored two award-winning books: Eye of the Albatross: Visions of Hope and Survival (winner of the 2003 John Burroughs Medal for natural history writing) and Song for the Blue Ocean: Encounters Along the World's Coasts and Beneath the Seas (winner of the Lannan Literary Award for Nonfiction). His love of nature began while his family raised canaries and pigeons as a child, matured while studying hawks and seabirds with the National Audubon Society and has led to a recognition that all life on the planet is affected by the oceans. He founded the Living Oceans Program at National Audubon, but ultimately felt the need for a unique, independent effort to help save the oceans. The Blue Ocean Institute, which he co-founded in 2003, is designed to inspire, rather than demand, conservation of the oceans through a non-traditional combination of science, art and literature.

Dr. Safina's talk will be based on his book, *Eye of the Albatross*, for which he spent months in the distant oceans of the world, chronicling the travels of one particular albatross named Amelia, whose stupendous travels were tracked via satellite as she ranged thousands of miles to find food for her patiently famished chick. These immense creatures we call "albatross" are the greatest long-distance wanderers on Earth. Big birds in big oceans, albatrosses lead big, sprawling lives across space and time, traveling to the limits of seemingly limitless seas. They accomplish these distances by wielding the wondrous body architecture of creatures built to glide indefinitely.

(Article and Registration continue on page 5)

St. Louis Audubon Society

Opportunities

and

Announcements

Mission Statement Of The St. Louis Audubon Society

Help our community sustain biological Diversity through Nature.

Goals
To foster an awareness and understanding
Of birds and other
wildlife and their
habitats

To educate our community so people can make Informed decisions about the natural world.

Birds Along the Mississippi Flyway

The St. Louis Audubon Society will present a 2 night course at Meramec Comm. College in April to meet curriculum requirements for the Master Naturalist Certificate. It will be held on April 19 and April 26 at 7:00 pm at Meramec. The presentation will be on migration of birds along the Mississippi Flyway. It will cover both transient birds, birds that winter in our area, and birds that nest here—then migrate—both long distance and short distances. It will also include the navigational tools these birds use to find their destinations. This will cover all birds seen in our area and with no specific emphasis on any particular classification of birds. There will be two field trips on the following Saturdays after the class sessions. The first will be on April 22, to a local area to see some spring migrants and the second on April 29, will be to Riverlands to coincide with the Spring Birding Festival.

For more information contact Meramec Comm. College Continuing Education at 314-984-7777 or go to their web site at www.stlcc.edu and look under Mater Naturalist Programs.

International Migratory Bird Conservation February Joint Meeting with WGNSS

Mark your calendar for Friday, February 10 at 7:30 p.m. at the Creve Coeur Community Center.

Every year over 400 bird species migrate from the United States and Canada to Latin America and the Caribbean Islands. For these long-distance migrants, U.S.-based land management and conservation efforts focus on their breeding habitat needs, which they occupy for only about four months each year. In contrast, these same birds spend about eight months of the year in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, with some even migrating far into South America. The wintering region with the highest concentrations of species of Missouri breeding birds is located between Mexico and Panama, an area about one-eighth the size of the breeding ground for the same species. Simply stated, one acre of bird conservation on the wintering ground is equal to eight acres of conservation on the breeding ground. It is also much less expensive to manage habitat on the wintering ground. Survivorship is important in the winter - bird's surviving the non breeding season hazards translates to more breeding birds in Missouri.

Brad Jacobs, Ornithologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation, will discuss the Department's leading role as a state agency in international conservation of these highly critical habitat areas.

• This is our annual joint meeting with the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, so you will have twice the people to meet and twice the opportunities to discover. The meeting is open to all, members or not. Refreshments will be available.

From I-270 and Ladue, go east on Ladue, left at the light at New Ballas, go ¼ mile north to the Creve Coeur Government Center at 300 N. New Ballas. Community Center is in the northwest corner of the lower level (closest to Olive and Ballas).

Questions, call Mitch Leachman at 314-739-5112.

Thanks For A Great Holiday Party!

More than fifty-five people attended the St. Louis Audubon Society-Webster Groves Nature Study Society holiday party held at The Green Center on Dec. 4. Many thanks to all who attended and participated in the festivities. We especially want to thank those who donated holiday decorations and items for the attendance drawings of nature-related gifts: photographers Jim Rathert, Rick Walters, and Margy Terpstra; artists Jim Ziebol, Dale Ponce, and Michael Van Houzen; retailers Dave Pierce of the Wild Bird Center, and Dannia and Bob Stephens of Wild Birds Unlimited; Pat Lueders for the Cheshire Inn; and Shaw Nature Reserve Staff Educator Barb Troutman. Thanks also to Dan Terpstra and Bob Siemer for their help with setting up beforehand and taking down afterwards, and to Pat McCormick, Mike Grant, and Sue Gustafson for staying to assist with clean-up. And, for planning and putting on a wonderful party, a big thanks to the committee of Margy Terpstra, Tina Weyman, Dency Kahn, Ann Earley, and Phyllis Oakes. Happy New Year to all St. Louis Audubon Society members!

President's Report

Yes, there is something extra in this issue of Tail Feathers. It is a membership survey which we ask that you complete and return. Your Board of Directors determined that there were several reasons for such a survey at this time:

- 1. We need to know how we are doing. What are we doing right; what do we need to do differently; what else should we be doing?
- 2. It has been sometime since we gathered demographic information on our membership.
- 3. We are experiencing increased interest in our programs and services, which is stretching the capabilities of several of our active committees. The Survey will give you members who are interested in helping with these activities an opportunity to identify yourselves and your area of interest, so that we can contact you about getting involved.

Please take the few minutes required to complete and return the survey and might I suggest that the best time to do that is <u>RIGHT NOW</u>. You will be helping us to have a more effective Audubon Society.

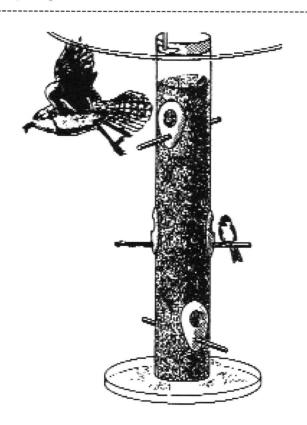
On a separate note, I am happy to pass on two recent items of good news.

First, as I reported in my message last month, things are progressing for the establishment of a National Audubon Center/Ark at the Confluence area of the Mississippi/Missouri River. I have just learned that an anonymous donor has pledged \$100,000 to permit the hiring of a Project Director in St. Louis. This extraordinary gift will greatly facilitate the planning stages of this project.

Secondly, most of you are aware of the wonderful urban forest found in Tower Grove Park (8,000 plus individual plants of over 300 varieties) and the extraordinary migrant stopover it provides. You may not be aware that many of the trees are suffering from the aging process and that last year there was extensive storm damage in the Park. The good news is that the Whitaker Foundation has announced a grant of \$200,000 plus an additional challenge grant of \$150,000 as matching funds. The funds are to be used to restore and enhance the Park forest by necessary maintenance of the current inventory of living trees and planting of replacement specimens that reflect Henry Shaw's vision for the Park. This is a project that all bird lovers should join, and we will advise further when details of the matching funds campaign become available, or for more information you can contact Shaughnessy Daniels at the Tower Grove Park office at 314-771-4454.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or comments at 314-579-9227.

Torrey Berger



Mark Your Calendar for The Great Backyard Bird Count! February 17-20, 2006

Get ready to join the rest of your North American bird watching friends! The event is sponsored by the National Audubon Society, Cornell Information Technologies, the National Science Foundation and Wild Birds Unlimited.

Count the birds in your backyard, record your information and submit on-line to: www.birdsource.org/gbbc

Last year, more that 613 species were documented. That tally came from the more than 52,000 checklists submitted!

This is your chance to be a citizen scientist!

If you have any questions, contact any Wild Birds Unlimited store in your area or visit: www.birdsource.org

Birding Trips for February and March John Solodar

February 4, Saturday - Riverlands Paul Bauer and Dave Rogles team up again to lead our last-of-the-winter trips to Riverlands. The twist is that this is an afternoon trip starting at 1:00 pm, which is handy for you late risers. We'll have a chance to see the gulls coming in to roost late in the day as well as to search for Short-eared Owls. Some good raptors might be around as well. There might be a drive into the Confluence Park for wintering sparrows. Once again, bring along the charcoal/iron filings hand warmers and lots of warm and wind-proof clothing.

February 18, Saturday - Baldwin Lake/Peabody Coal Strip Mines. This all day trip starts at 9:00 AM at Baldwin Lake, so bring a lunch and lots of warm clothing. Torrey Berger will lead us as we search for Snow Geese, Ross' Geese, ducks, Loggerhead Shrikes, Short-eared Owls (plentiful in one field last year at Peabody) and lots of other goodies. Bring an Illinois map as it can be a little tricky navigating home from the Peabody Coal Strip Mines. An FRS radio is also very handy on this trip.

March 11, Saturday - Busch Conservation Area Annual Woodcock and Owl Prowl. Note the 5:00 PM starting time. We return to Busch for the annual Woodcock and Owl Prowl inaugurated by Jim Malone many years ago. Pat Lueders will lead this always popular event which will start from Hampton Lake. We'll spend the late afternoon searching for owls and then go to a good location to see and hear the woodcocks perform their mating calls and flights.

How to get there

Baldwin Lake. Take I-270 across from Jefferson Barracks Bridge to IL. Take Hwy 3 south to Redbud. Go east on Hwy 154 to Baldwin, IL. Follow signs in town to Lake Baldwin. Meet in parking lot inside gate. The group will caravan to the Peabody Coal Strip Mines area.

Busch Conservation Area - Take U.S.40/I-64 west into St. Charles County. Take Hwy 94 south from U.S 40 about 1 mile to Hwy D. Turn right and go about 1.5 miles to the entrance on the right. Turn left at the "T" to Hampton Lake and meet in the parking lot. For trips using a H.Q starting point turn right at the "T".

Horseshoe Lake - Take I-70 east across Poplar Street ridge. Exit at Highway 111 (exit 6) and turn left. Go north a few miles to the State park entrance (on left). Meet at the first parking lot on the right.

Riverlands - Take Hwy 367 north from I-270. The designation changes to Hwy 67 just beyond the 4th traffic light, but continue. Turn right on last road just before the Clark Bridge at the Mississippi River. (Fisca gas station at this turn.) Turn right on the first road and park in the Teal Pond parking lot.



WHAT'S A LEK? ST. LOUIS AUDUBON DUNN RANCH/PRAIRIE CHICKEN TRIP FRIDAY, APRIL 7-SUNDAY APRIL 9, 2006

We will drive to the Dunn Ranch in Northwest Missouri, approximately a 5 hour drive, on Friday, April 7th. We will stay in a motel near there, and we have reservations to view the lek with Nature Conservancy and MDC at dawn on Saturday, April 8th. We will return to St. Louis on Sunday, April 9th, stopping along the route to bird and returning during the early evening.

Space is limited in the lek. If you would like to participate in the trip, please complete the form below and mail it immediately. You will be notified by mail or e-mail if your application is accepted. We will keep a waiting list in case of cancellations.

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON PRAIRIE CHICKEN TRIP
NAME:
ADDRESS:
NOTIFY US BY EMAIL:
NOTIFY US BY PHONE:
DAY PHONE:
CELL/NIGHT PHONE:
MAIL TO: PATILIEDERS 470 SHERWOOD DR

ST. LOUIS, MO 63119



In the last few years albatrosses have been tracked by Earth-orbiting satellites, and their true travels outdistance all previous conjecture. During their whole lifespan they expend 95 percent of their existence at sea, flying most of that time. Doing so, they cover distances equivalent to flying around Earth at the equator three times every year. A 50-year-old albatross has flown, at minimum, 3.7 million miles. Because they range so far and live so long, albatrosses intersect and contend with almost every effect that people exert upon the sea. Everything people are doing to oceans, albatrosses feel. Dr. Safina will share what their survival teaches us about persistence, hope, and how the oceans are changing.

We hope you will share our excitement about spending an evening with Dr. Safina, learning about his personal journey and how each of us has a role in preserving our Blue Oceans.

5:30 p.m.—Business Meeting

6:00 p.m.—Cash Bar Opens, Silent Auction Starts

7:00 p.m.—Dinner Service

The business meeting is open to all, but only current SLAS members will be allowed to vote in the election of the Board of Directors. Feel free to skip the business portion and arrive during the social hour that starts at 6 p.m.

The cost is just \$25 per person. Reservations are required—please use the form below.

Space is limited, so please register early to be sure you can enjoy this wonderful evening!

The Cheshire Inn is near the intersection of Clayton and Skinker, just across Clayton Avenue and south of the giant Amoco station. To avoid traffic, suggest you approach <u>from the west</u> on Clayton. Parking in front of the restaurant is limited, we suggest you use the garage behind the hotel, accessed by a ramp to the left of the hotel's entrance.

	An	nual Banquet Regis	tration Form	
Please mail this form or a copy with payment to: Mitch Leachman, 2728 Lakeport Drive, Maryland Heights, MO 63043 Make checks payable to <u>St. Louis Audubon Society</u> .				
Name(s)		\$25.00 x Fee No.	_ = Total Enclosed	
Entrée Choices, Plea	se Select One Per Person			
London Broil	Chicken Marsala	Vegetarian		

Report for Saturday, December 10, 2005 by Mike Thelen

Weather at St. Louis — 06:00 this morning: temperature: 21 degrees. The sky was cloudy with a slight wind of 5 mph from the South.

25 souls participated in the ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY field trip to Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary in St. Charles County today. The trip began at 09:00, and it was brisk enough by noon that most folks called it a day. A few extended the trip by birding for another hour. By my count we totaled 44 species, including MUTE SWAN, LONG-TAILED DUCK (with thanks to Randy Korotev for the tip), PEREGRINE FALCON, and LAPLAND LONGSPUR.

We relocated the Long-tailed Duck exactly where Randy described it: from a vantage point at the base of the observation tower, looking toward the upstream end of the lock wall. Everyone in the group got to see the bird, and it was a lifer for some. And just as we finished watching the bird, it took flight with 4 other ducks and headed downstream. Some of us watched it until it was out of sight. One interesting gull, seen early in the day was a candidate for first winter THAYER'S GULL; however, it was well out in Ellis Bay and best needed closer scrutiny to be sure. The bird was uniformly warm brown, without any discernable black, as on the nearby immature Herring Gulls. It was seen in flight and showed translucent primaries, above and below. Standing on the ice it showed warm brown-centered tertials, edged whitish.

Highlights for the day...

- Mute Swan, 1, in Ellis Bay, across from Wise Rd. at the beginning of the day
- Trumpeter Swan, 61, including a few birds in the water, a few small groups flying about, and 45 birds resting in a corn-stubble field adjacent to Confluence Rd.
- 13 species of duck, including:
 - Gadwall, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, LONG-TAILED DUCK, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, common Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, & Ruddy Duck
- Turkey Vulture, 1, soaring over the city of Alton, 3 Bald Eagles, 6 Northern Harrier
 2 Cooper's Hawk, 10 Red-tailed Hawk, 5 American Kestral, and one Peregrine Falcon,
 perched at the top of the Missouri-side tower of the Clark Bridge

Other species found: Killdeer, Thayer's Gull, Mourning Dove, Sparrows included only: American Tree Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, 100, abundant today, especially around the visitor center, Dark-eyed Junco, Lapland Longspur, 2, seen by only a few along Confluence Rd.

— Meadowlark, sp., 7, including 5 decorating a small tree like Christmas ornaments.



Backyard Birding Festival At

Missouri Botanical Gardens Saturday, February 4 and February 5, 2006

Want to learn more about the feathered friends in your backyard? Want family-friendly activities that are both fun and educational? Join the Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis Audubon Society, Missouri Department of conservation, Webster Groves Nature Study Society, The Saint Louis Zoo, and the World Bird Sanctuary for a day of classes, presentations, stories, and guided bird walks. Browse our collection of informational booths to learn more about birds and the Great Backyard Bird Count.

Special Kick-off Event! Owl Prowl

Saturday, February 4 5:00-6:30 p.m.

This event is free, but you must pre-register Activities include:

Guided Bird walks around the Garden
Basic, Advanced, and Family Birding Classes
Special presentation: "Believe-It-or-Not" Facts about Birds and
Winter Birds of Missouri
Exhibitors, Storytime, and more!

Pre-registration required!

Adults: \$15; Family (up to five participants) \$25; Each additional member \$5;

Children under 2 free

To Pre-register call: 314-577-5149, 314-577-9506, or 314-

577-5143 or

Download a form at: www.mobot.org/education/birding



Tale Feathers

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To contact the editor, call evenings to 314-576-1473 or email: mdueren@charter.net

St. Louis Audubon Society 2004 - 2005

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VP Conservation - Linda Tossing	314-849-4260
VP Finance - John Solodar	314-862-5294
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St. Louis Audubon Society

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Join the St. Louis Audubon Society and the National Audubon Society

As a joint member with National Audubon, you will receive National Audubon's quarterly magazine (Audubon) as well as St. Louis Audubon Society's Newsletter (Tale Feathers). Now you also have the opportunity to join only the St. Louis Audubon Society, receive Tale Feathers, and participate in the educational and conservation activities of St. Louis Audubon. There is no distinction between individual and family membership. Dues cover all members at the same address. For information, call (314) 822-6595.

Use this form to join St. Louis Audubon / National Audubon

For joint membership in St. Louis Audubon Society and National Audubon Society, Make checks payable to National Audubon

Society and mail to St. Louis Audubon Society, P.O.Box 220227, Kirkwood, MO. 63122

_____Membership/\$35 For renewal in the National Audubon Society, we recommend that you use the forms supplied by

National Audubon. For more information, contact Anne Rankin Horton at 636-256-3402.

_____Introductory Membership / \$20 ______Special Two -Year Introductory Membership / \$30

_____Senior Citizen (62 and older) / \$15 (New and renewal) ______Student / \$15 (New and renewal)

Membership in only the St. Louis Audubon Society: Write checks payable to SLAS. Mail to St. Louis Audubon Society, P.O. Box 220227, Kirkwood, MO 63122.

_____Local Chapter Membership only (St. Louis Audubon Society), Introductory and renewal / \$15

Name_____Address

City_____State___Zip Code______NO1 7XCH

1.	What are your primary interests associated with Audubon? (Mark "1" for your
	favorite, "2" for your second choice etc.)
	a Nature (birds, other wildlife etc.)
	b Conservation (endangered species, habitat etc.)
	c. Other
2.	Should our chapter be more concerned, less concerned or remain at the same level
	of concern in regard to the following activities?
	a. Offer natural experiences and/or informationmoresameless
	b. Influence public policy on conservation issuesmoresameless
3.	At what level should we focus on the following activities? Check a maximum of 2
	for each.
	a. Naturelocalstatenationalinternational
	b. Conservationlocalstatenationalinternational
	c. Field tripslocalstatenationalinternational
4.	Which of the following program topics would you be interested in learning more
	about and attending? (Mark "1" for your favorite, "2" for your second choice etc.)
	a Natural History (Birds, Butterflies, Forests, Prairies)
	bTravelogues (Natural areas, Birding areas)
	c"How To" Workshops (Birding skills, Photography, Building bird and
	bat houses, Landscaping for birds and other wildlife, Bird feeding etc.)
	d Conservation Issues
	e Other
5.	What are the reasons you would attend one of our monthly meetings. (Mark "1"
	for your favorite, "2" for your second choice etc.)
	Learn Learn
	Have Fun
	Socialize
6.	Rate which features of the St. Louis Audubon Society (SLAS) Newsletter you
	like best. (Mark "1" for your favorite, "2" for your second choice, etc.)
	aNature articles eLocal announcements
	bConservation f Other
	cEducation features gDo not read newsletter
	dNature/field trip opportunities
	ould you be willing to help the following committees? If any, please include name
	d phone number on last page.
7.	The conservation committee
	a Build bird boxes
	b Conduct bird surveys on conservation areas and parks
	c Help research a local conservation issue
	dWrite a newsletter article on a conservation issue
	e Participate in Project Feeder Watch and other "Citizen Scientist" projects
8.	The education committee
	aGive or assist with a presentation to a school group, seniors, garden club or
	other wildlife conservations groups.
	b Help create educational displays or leaflets
	c Lead or assist with a field trip.

9.	assist?
	aHelp at newsletter mailing parties
	bWrite an article for the newsletter
	cAssist with chapter correspondence
	dHelp with newsletter layout and design
	eAssist with financial planning and fundraising
	fRepair/Upgrade chapter computer electronics
	hWrite and mail press releases to local newspapers
	iLead field trip
	jHelp maintain chapter website
	jOther
	Have you taken a field trip in the last 3 years?YesNo
11.	If you haven't taken a field trip in the last 3 years, which of the following reasons
	apply?
	a Lack of time
	bTime that walk was scheduled did not fit my schedule
	cLack of bird knowledge
	dNot interested in field trips
	ePhysical disability
	fDistance to or unfamiliarity with field trip location
	gWeather
	hOther
12.	Audubon has excellent outdoor education summer camps for teachers and the
	general public SLAS offers scholarships for educators to these camps. If you are interested in receiving information about these camps or know a teacher that might be interested, check here If yes include name and phone number below.
	SLAS offers membership in the local chapter only. (Includes SLAS newsletter, funds go to the local chapter) or a national plus local membership (includes the national magazine and the SLAS newsletter, funds go to national). If you are interested in additional information about a local chapter only membership, check here include name and phone number below.
	If you would you like information on how to make a donation to SLAS, check the
	appropriate blanks and include name and phone number below.
	a. Planned giving
	bTo the general fund
	cTo a specific project (barn owl boxes, least tern blind, habitat
	restoration).
15.	Check all that apply:
	I obtain nature information from newspapers, magazines & other printed
	materials.
	I obtain nature information from various websites on the internet.
	I regularly visit the St. Louis Audubon Society website.
	I never have visited or seldom visit the St. Louis Audubon Society website
	1.57 May visited of seldom visit the St. Louis Addubon Society website

16. What is the makeup of your household?
a. Number in residence
b. Ages (Indicate number is each category)
1-10
11-18 Sedenside verbale herhalite Allers I. 12 me C
Over 18
c. Number of birdfeeders that you maintain around your yard
d. Approximate number of bird and nature books in your household
baddan all the late none and all the state of the state o
in the end of a 1-10 seem of the indication and a constitution of the constitution of
11-25
over 25
17. Additional questions or comments
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NamePhone number

Dear St. Louis Audubon Society Member,

How are we doing? What else can we do or what can we do differently? Your Board of Directors wants to know your answers to these questions, and those contained in the enclosed survey, so that our plans and programs going forward can be responsive to your interests and needs.

Please help us in this endeavor by taking the time to complete the survey, refold it, attach a stamp and mail it back to us by March 1, 2006

Thank you for your attention and response.

St. Louis Audubon Society
Board of Directors

(Please fold in thirds, tape close, making sure the address below appears on the outside or place in an envelope)

AFFIX STAMP

J. Torrey Berger, President St. Louis Audubon Society 1257 Takara Court St. Louis, MO 63131